

- (c) the yellow color toner image is positioned closer to the receiving material than any other color toner image when two or more of the color toner images including the yellow image are overlaid;
- (d) the color toners used have a melt viscosity not greater than 120 mPas•sec at 140°C, and
- (e) each of the color toner images has a haze factor not greater than 20% when the color toner images have a weight of 8 g/m² and are fixed.

Full color image forming methods (exemplified by Iwasaki, Kuramoto, Aoki, Takahashi, and Hata, among the references of record herein) have conventionally employed contact fixing. Other references of record (Elsermans, McInally and Moser) describe non-contact fixing and/or teach that contact fixing is known to present problems such as image offsetting, resolution degradation, etc.; but as applicants' specification (at p. 2, lines 18-23) explains, non-contact fixing methods are themselves associated with problems in image quality including poor light resistance and difficulty in achieving good color reproducibility. None of the references cited as showing non-contact fixing or its advantages even alludes to these problems.

The present invention enables the attainment, with non-contact fixing methods, of image quality as good as that provided by contact fixing methods, so that inferior image quality does not detract from the benefits of non-contact fixing. That is to say, the invention provides image quality, in non-contact fixing operations, that is *equal* (though not superior) to that afforded by contact fixing procedures. The attainment of image quality, with non-contact fixing, *equal* to that of contact fixing, is in itself a beneficial new result because it overcomes a drawback of the otherwise advantageous non-contact fixing methods.